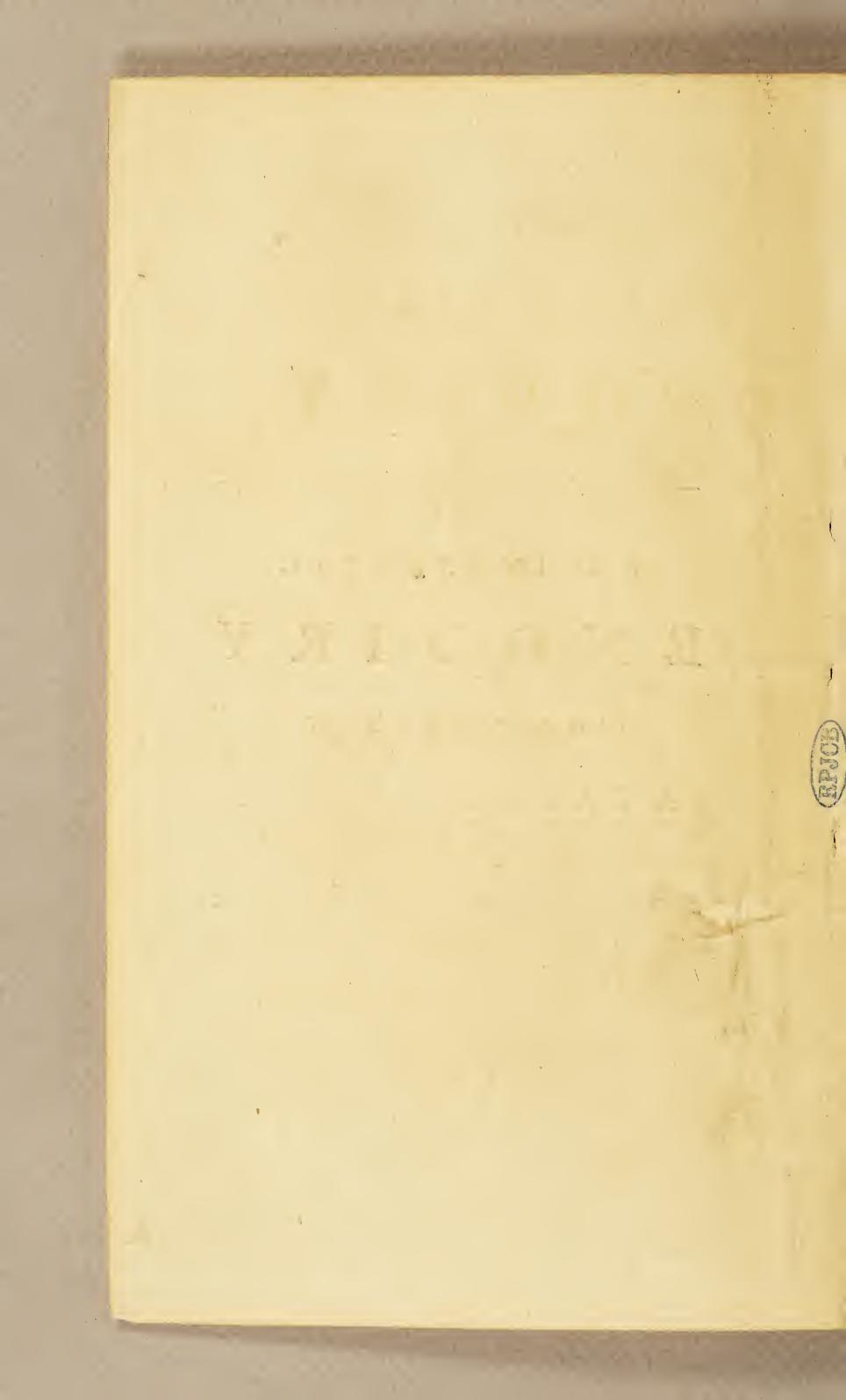
#### AN IMPARTIAL

## ENQUIRY

Into the CONDUCT of

A LATE MINISTER.



### IMPARTIAL

# ENQUIRY

INTO THE

## CONDUCT

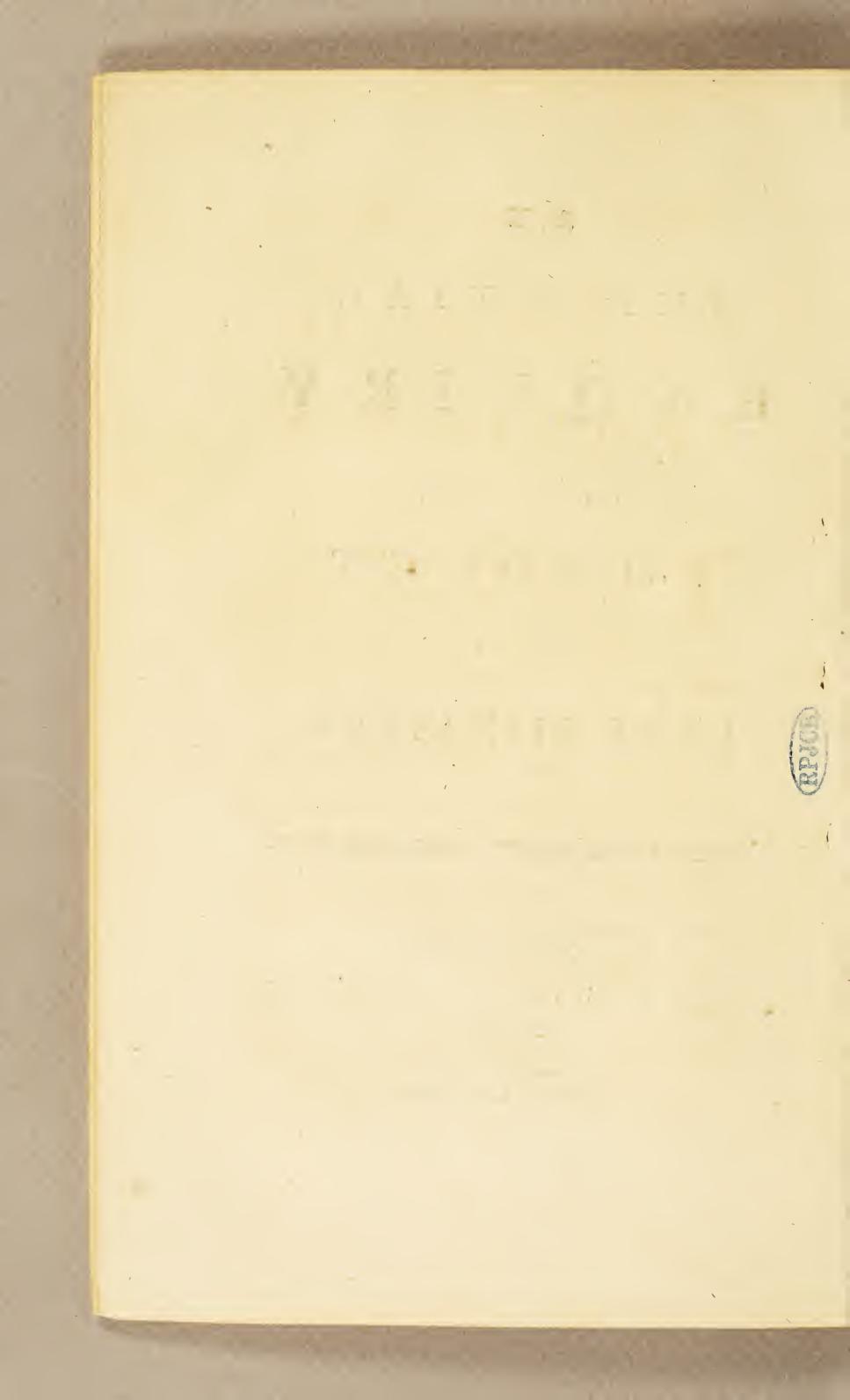
OF A

LATE MINISTER.

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### AN IMPARTIAL

## ENQUIRY, &c.

who have no Opinion of their own, is not to be admired: For they are like fo much Straw, which is eafily fet on Fire with the smallest Spark. In the mean time, such is their Instability, that they are often heard to pour out their Curses against those very People, whom, but a few Days before, they perfectly idolized, and with their Voices exalted to the very Clouds. What Wonder, then, is it, that false Merit, uplisted by the foul Breath of little Emissaries, who have their own pitiful Ends to pursue, should A gain

gain an Esteem and Reputation among a Company of Grocers, low Bookfellers, and Coblers, superior to real Merit? But that a Set of Men, who have Opportunities of being better informed, should so far decline the Use of their Reason as to fuffer themselves to be carried away by the Tide of popular Clamor, artificially raised in favor of this or that Man, fills one with no less Astonishment than Contempt. Public Virtue, or at least the Appearance of it, is effential to the Schemes of political Ambition; for without a Mask she would appear so horrid hideous and despicable, that no body could possibly countenance her. He, therefore, who has formed Defigns of aggrandizing himself, is obliged to disguise his real Sentiments, that he might more eafily take Advantage of the short-sighted, ignorant, and weak Part of Mankind, who

are but too often abused by a specious Affectation of Public Spirit, and a sham Difregard of Power and Riches, that old, trite, stale Pretext, by which artful and aspiring Men have often gained such Credit as has enabled them to attain to the highest Degree of Wealth and Power; which, without it, they could not have attained; and which, in the End, we have never failed to find that they have had in View, however much they affected to despise them. But every Tree is best known by its Fruits. Let us, then impartially examine this Great Man's Conduct who has lately refigned, and consider if he is truly that Great Man which common Fame has represented. The Eclat of one or two popular Measures, even though attended with Success, is not alone sufficient to establish the Character

of

of a Great Minister with Men of Sense; for these may be necessary, not only to acquire Credit at first, but to open People's Hearts and Purses on future Occasions: Gamesters and Sharpers, we know, often fuffer those, whom they are at last sure of taking-in, and perhaps stripping of their All, to be Gainers at the Outset. Let us not be so deceived; but let us enquire what real Services he has done the Commonwealth, and if they are such as might have been expected from a truly Great Minister, furnished with that extraordinary, I had almost said unlimited, Power which has been granted to Mr. P---. In the mean time, it would be an Injustice to others not to ascribe to them the Honor of such Schemes as they themselves first projected; in which Mr. P--could not possibly have had any other Share or Merit, than in seconding them

them in Council, however he may plume himself on having the sole Credit of them. We ought also to consider, if the Commonwealth has in any Respect suffered, as well as been benefited, by his GUIDANCE, that, by comparing the Good with the Bad, we may impartially determine of his Merits. But, perhaps, we shall be better able to judge of his Principles, if we take a Retrospect of his whole Political Conduct. Mr. P---, then, during the Life of Sir R---, who, it was said, knew his ----, continued the same zealous and flaming Patriot as he had professed himself in the Time of S— of M—, who most graciously bequeathed him a considerable Legacy, with no other View than that, being rendered independent, he would be less liable to become a Court-convert:

But, behold, Ld O\_d had scarce resigned his last Breath before he began to revere the Ashes of that very Man whose Destruction he had before labored to effect, half bullying, half yielding to the thenreigning Administration, whom he was courting at the same time that he was maltreating, till, in short, Mr. P—m and he could agree upon Terms, which were no sooner settled than he was forced on his late Majesty, by a Measure which was not effected without offering the highest Indignity to the Throne, and fuch as almost partook of Treason itself: From which Time all Opposition, on his Part, to Hanoverians and Hanoverian Meafures, totally ceased, against whom and against which no Man had inveighed with greater Bitterness and Inveteracy than himself.

himself. "But Brutus is an honorable " Man!" What Effect this his first Desertion of the Public had on the Minds of Men who had entertained the highest Opinion of his Integrity and Abilites, every body remembers. All future Confidence seemed to be annihilated at once; and fuch a general Distrust prevailed, that no body was believed to have had any thing in View, but to raise Fortunes to themfelves out of the Ruins of the Public: Whatever Measures the Ministry thought fit to engage in, whatever Taxes they were pleased to impose, passed almost without a Negative: And this State-Calm, which began soon after Mr. P--- relinquished the Opposition, continued almost uninterrupted, till a certain Great Personage was thought to have gained fuch Ascendency in the Cabinet as gave

gave Jealoufy to the reigning Administration. The War with France commencing about this Juncture, it was imagined, that a Body of British Troops would have been employed in defence of his Majesty's Electoral Dominions, which were invaded by the Enemy. Then, and not till then, Mr. P- resumed his Patriot-Principles, and once more manfully opposed Continental Measures, declaring, that, if a fingle Man was sent to Germany, he should look on such a Step as making ourselves Principals on the Continent. Happy, thrice happy, had it been for us, if he had stedfastly persevered in these National Sentiments. Millions then would have been faved to Great-Britain: Her People, too, would have been faved; whereas the Want of Hands has been feverely felt of late in almost all our Manufactures.

factures. On the other side, undrained of that Money which has been so profusely squandered, and quite shamefully lavished, in Germany, this Country would have been in a much better Condition of triumphing over her Enemy than she can possibly expect, engaged, as she is, in that dangerous, ruinous, and all-confuming German War, by which we have already been as great Losers as we can possibly hope to be Gainers, even on an honorable Peace. But I am forry to fay, that the Expectations of the other Party were no sooner frustrated, than Mr. P-, on receiving the Seals, became as great an Advocate in favour of Continental Measures as he was before a violent Opposer of them; and, instead of refusing, in the same Circumstances, a single Man to Germany, he sends away British-born Subjects B by

by Thousands, and their Money by Millions. "But Brutus is an honor-" able Man!" The Consequence of this fatal Step was our being drained of such Numbers of Men, that a Militia, which the Court itself had been ever averse to, became a Measure of Necessity; for without it we should have been left in a quite defenceless State, more Regular Forces being actually employed abroad, in Defence of Germany, than were left at home for the Defence of Great-Britain. In this, however, Mr. Pshewed himself but lukewarm: But after it was carried in Parliament, what Use did he make of this truly National Measure, (for such, surely, it would have been, had the Bill been properly drawn) other than to smuggle away more British Troops to Hanover? which, too,

was done in the most injurious Manner to this Country, the Men which were draughted for this Service being picked and culled from the respective Corps; whereby we; in a great measure, lost the Flower of our Army. The Militia, too, was so harrassed, by being embodied and kept out from their respective Counties, when no Invasion threatened the Kingdom, in which Case only the Spirit of the Act seemed to allow of their being kept out, that they not only became a Burthen to the Public, but the Service was made odious to every independent Gentleman who had the Honor to bear his Majesty's Commission. Nor can I here pass over a Measure, which nothing less than the most imminent and immediate Danger threatening the State can possibly justify; a Measure which can't fail striking B 2

king every Lover of his Country with a serious and just Concern; a Measure which appears to me not only unparliamentary, but anticonstitutional; if not, it argues at least a Defect in the Constitution. mean the Practice of raising new Regiments without first obtaining the Consent of Parliament. I am not infensible, that the Approbation of Parliament comes after. But, surely, there is a wide Difference between obtaining the Leave of Parliament at first, and wire-drawing its Approbation after the Troops have been raised: For there are, give me Leave to say, who may be induced to give their Sanction to such a Measure after it is done, which they could not refuse without condemning the Measure itself, and the Authors of it; and yet, perhaps, would have never given their Consent if they had been

at first consulted. I can't, therefore, look upon this Measure in any other Light than inverting the Order of Bufiness, and presuming too much on the Pliability of Parliament. It is, however, far from my Intentions to dispute the Power of the King's Prerogative on this Occasion; but I have always been of Opinion, that this Power was vested in the Crown when we had fewer Regular Forces than we have at present, with no other View than as a Provision against any Emergency which might happen, the Senate not sitting; in short, that it was given for the Protection, not the Oppression, of the Subject. But the new-raised Regiments are so far from giving any additional Strength, that they are a Weakness to the Army, the old Corps being proportionably

ably incomplete. Nor is this the greatest Mischief: These raw Men cannot be taken from their several Trades without Trade itself becoming a considerable Sufferer: The Officers, too, will necessarily become a Burthen to us after the Peace; but, above all; the Measure itself is totally inconfistent with the salutary Intention of a Militia, upon which, give me Leave to say, the Salvation of this Country in a great Measure depends: For who (under any other Government than his present Majesty's, whose Paternal Affection for his People will always be their Safeguard) could reflect on the late amazing Increase of our Army, without being filled with the most alarming Apprehensions of Military Power? which is so great already, that, if not timely reduced, it can't fail, sooner or later, proving destructive of British Liberty. " Brutus § Brutus is an honorable Man!" now, we compare the Expence of the War carried on under the Auspices of the Great D- of M-, which, too, was crowned with the greatest Success, with the Expence of the present War, we shall find no small Difference. On Examination, we shall find, that the highest Expence which we stood at any one Year scarce exceeded 7,200,000 l. Civil-List included; and other Years not near so much. how much less this Year will our Expences amount to than eighteen Millions? Good God! Is there any Man, in his fober Senfes, who imagines that the Nation can long support a War carried on at this Rate? What Advantages can we hope to gain adequate to fuch an Expence as we have already been at? Nay, will it be possiple to keep even those which we have already gained,

gained, if the War should be continued on the same lavish Footing many Years longer? To know what a Nation can or cannot bear, in order to square his Meafures, either of Offence or Defence, by the Extent of the People's Abilities, during a State of War, is undoubtedly a Minister's first Duty: For if he has not well considered this Point, he must infallibly be very unequal to the sole Direction, and, in steering the Commonwealth-Ship, will be often in Danger of running her on Quicksands If a private Person was about erecting a magnificent Edifice, would it not be prudent in him to take it previously into his Thoughts, how well he could afford the Expence? And if he found that he could not well spare the Money, would it not be necessary for him to contract his Plan? And

And is not the same Policy as requisite to a Minister who undertakes to plan for the Public during a Time of War, without which he is liable to involve the Nation in an Expence which may sooner or later prove its irretrievable Ruin? Schemes of Oeconomy, I am sensible, were very much talked of in the Beginning: But in what did these fair Promises end? The Reformation which was begun extended only to the Wine-Office, where the Commissioners had their Salaries allowed them during Life, with an Addition of as much more as their Perquisites amounted to; so that the Public, instead of being eased in that Particular, was more heavily loaded; and all that she gained by it was a Kind of Reversion of those Places, in case they should not happen in suture to be re-established. Permit

Permit me here to observe, that, when Military Officers are laid afide, they are reduced to Half-Pay only, even though they have perhaps hazarded their Lives in their Country's Service. What Pretence, then, these Gentlemen could have had to more than their Salaries, I must own that I am at a Loss to conceive. Other Places, altogether as useless, remain untouched; and, instead of making fuch Savings of the public Treasure, as easily might have been made, we seem to have been more profusely lavish of it, in proportion as we can less afford it. What shameful and confused Accounts of Moneys expended in Germany, some of it too without proper Vouchers, have we not known pass a certain Place almost without a fingle Question being asked, under the baneful Influence of this Gentleman's

tleman's Administration? What Numbers of idle Expeditions have there not been planned, which could not possibly answer any other End than that of weakening ourselves? And in carrying them into Execution, how very little Attention has there been paid to Oeconomy? It was but last Year, when an Expedition was forming at Portsmouth, that, though many of the Transports lay then in the River, which were appointed to serve on that Expedition, yet, instead of having the Military Stores imbarked a-board them, they were all fent by Land at an immense Expence. But why do I mention this Trifle, when the same Want of Occonomy prevails through every Part of Government? What immense Expence, again, were we not put to in preparing an Expedition against the Island of Mauritius, C 2

ritius, which appeared at last to have been so ill calculated, that, before the Fleet was in readiness, it proved too late to send our Ships there? Let me further ask, What Advantages have we reaped from all those idle Expeditions which we have from Time to Time made on the Coast of France? In short, What is all this, in fact, but plundering the People of their Money, and wantonly squandering it among a Sét of iniquitous Contractors? But, for Heaven's Sake, is it not the Part of a Minister, especially one who affects to be called a Patriot Minister, and who undertakes the sole Management of the War,is it not, I say, his Business to superintend every Kind of Expence, and to watch over the Public, to see that they, through whose Hands the Money passes, are guilty of no Peculation; that every thing

thing is done in the best, cheapest, and most frugal Manner; and that whatever Money is laid out, is employed to such Ends and Purposes as are most likely to redound to the Honor and Interest of the Commonwealth? Ought he not more particularly to be careful, how he rashly engages the Nation in an Expence greater than the People can well support? The Consequence of which is, that, not being able to make good her Payments in Time, she must pay so much dearer for every thing; which can't fail bringing on her Ruin so much faster. How very near that Ruin already approaches, I must own that I dread to think. But, to hope the best, should we happily see an End of this War, in what a miserable Condition will not this poor Country be left, which is now bleeding at every Vein! We are

at present like a high-bred Steed, who, in running the Course, has been pushed beyond his Strength; which, however, could not have happened to us, if we had not been engaged in fighting other People's Battles as well as our own. I am senfible it will be urged, that, in Honor, we were obliged to defend H-r. Be it so: Was there not a more eligible Expedient? Would it not have been cheaper for us to have indemnified his Majesty, by paying him as much as the neat Annual Income of his Electoral Dominions amounted to, during the Time of their being in Possession of the French? But when France had agreed to a Neutrality, who then advised his Majesty to break the Treaty of Cloister-Seven, to involve this Nation deeper than ever in a German War, and to abandon his Royal Highness, who made that Treaty, which no less redounded

dounded to his Honor than to our Interest? Hinc illæ lachrymæ! Was this the Price of Cabinet-Favor? Surely, if there is a Grain of British Spirit left, the Time will yet come when a Parliamentary Enquiry, and a strict one too, will be made into this Measure; and I hope that I shall still live to see the Day when an Impeachment will be brought against the Author of that infamous and ruinous Advice: "But Brutus is an ho-" norable Man!" I come now to the last Thing which I have to take notice of, in regard to Mr. P—'s Conduct, viz. his Refignation of the Seals, leaving, it is true, the Nation covered with Honor, but covered, too, with a Debt of little less than \* 136 Millions, inclusive of the

<sup>\*</sup> This enormous Sum exclusive of the many Millions which have been raised and expended within the Year:

the Expences of the ensuing Year; very near 60 Millions of which (be it remembered) have been contracted under Mr. P---'s own glorious Administration. The avowed Reason of this extraordinary Step, taken at this Juncture, is said to be, that, being overruled by the Majority of the Council, in regard to Measures to be taken against Spain, founded on what Spain had already done, not on what that Court may further intend to do, he would not be responsible for Measures which he was no longer allowed to guide. But if this had been the real Cause, why did he not refign sooner? When he received repeated Applications from our Merchants, in regard

Year: All which added together, if looked upon in the Light of so much Purchase-Money, cannot appear other than buying Honor at a most extravagant Price.

regard to their not having received any Satisfaction on account of fuch Captures as had been made after the Time limited by Treaty, and which were acknowledged and confessed by the Court of Spain itself, did then any of his Warmth appear against Spain? Or did he exert himself in obtaining those injured People a proper Redress? When, again, the Retention of the Antigallican rung in his Ears, did he then require proper Satisfaction, or insist on an immediate Rupture with Spain? Nay, did not his Friends at that very Time take Pains to persuade People of its being a very improper Juncture to break with Spain? If then, on neither of these Occasions, he insisted on vigorous Meafures, or resigned the Seals, is it very likely that he should do it now with any other View but to withdraw himself in Time,

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before

before People's Eyes were open, and his Credit failed him? But admit, for a Moment, that this was the true Cause of his Resignation. Is it a Point so undeniably clear, that we ought immediately to enter into a War with Spain, as not to leave Room for any Doubt? Might there not be those of a more sedate and calm Temper, who, without Offence, might think such a Step too precipitate, and might possibly with that every just Expedient was first tried before War was declared, which once begun, who knows where and when it may end? Is it sure, too, in our present Circumstances, which are entirely owing to this Gentleman's Conduct, that without abandoning Germany, which I don't find that he ever intended, we could carry on fuch a War any long Time without Risk of a National

tional Bankruptcy? That Spain has been much more disposed to show Favor to the Enemy than to us, and that her Behaviour to our People is, in many Instances, totally inexcusable, I make not the least Question: But, perhaps, it may be good Policy, even in Princes, sometimes to look through their Fingers; Peace, in a Trading Country, being far more eligible than War. In the mean time, to prepare for War, as if War was unavoidable, is no less prudent than necessary; and if Spain, notwithstanding our Forbearance, should proceed to force us into one, by adding Insult to Insult, as we shall have nothing to answer for, in carrying on the War, to God or Man, we ought to support our present National Distress with the Courage of Romans, and, if possible, redouble our Efforts, with a Resolution of

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convincing our unprovoked Enemy, that we are not reduced to so low an Ebb, as not to be able to take that ample Satisfaction of her Insolence, which injured Britons have so just a Right to expect and demand. The Question then comes in regard to this Gentleman's being made responsible for Measures which he himself did not approve in Council: In answer to which, give me Leave to say, if delivering his Opinion in Writing, signed with his Name, was not alone sufficient to have indemnified him, what hindered him, as a Member of Parliament, moving for an humble Address to his Majesty, to have peremptorily demanded Satisfaction from the Court of Spain for any Losses sustained by his British Subjects, and to have affured him of his Parliament's Readiness to support him in case of Spain's

Spain's Refusal? which if he had done, having had sufficient Grounds for it, who afterwards could have blamed Mr. Pon account of Spain? But the Manner in which he professes quitting the Seals is perhaps unexampled; because, forsooth, he was not any longer suffered to guide: As if they who composed the Council were fummoned only as so many Noughts to make this Gentleman's Unity so much more fignificant; and that they were admitted on no better Footing at that Board, than to be entirely at his Devotion in every Measure which he pleased to dictate to them. Good Gods! what astonishing Insolence! that one Man should presume to take upon himself the Guidance of the rest, of equal Birth, of equal Parts and Abilities with himself, and to deny his Prince that Privilege, which his Prerogative

tive entitles him to, especially in regard to Peace and War, of either receiving or rejecting the Council which is offered! To have suffered this, one must have looked on his Majesty as held in Leading-Strings, and the rest of the Council merely as this Gentleman's Attendants. The Wisdom and Excellency of this Constitution is manifest in nothing more than in leaving as little absolute Power as possible even in the Hands of the Crown: And shall a Subject dare usurp it; one, too, who has professed himself a Friend to Liberty and the Constitution? When a late Great Minister was called, by his Adversaries, a Kind of Dictator, who more passionately exclaimed against his Power than Mr. P-? And yet he would willingly now assume to himself the same Power of Dictatorship.

But what Shadow of Excuse has he for taking a Pension of 3000 l. per annum for his and his Son's Life, and that too at a Time of public Distress? Is it for the Services which he has done his OWN Country? As to them, has he not been fufficiently rewarded by the great and opulent Places which he has long enjoyed? And I will add, that whatever he has done is no more than he owes his Country in the Discharge of his Duty. How widely different, and how much more noble, was the Conduct of the Great Lock on the like Occasion! who did infinitely more Honor to his Country than ever Mr. P - did. When, on account of his Health, he was obliged to refign his Place at the Board of Trade, where no Man was ever better qualified to sit than himself, and had a Pension offered him.

him, though he really wanted it, he had too much public Spirit to become a Burden to his Country. How different also was Lord Sunderland's Behaviour in a parallel Case! who declared, that, if he was not deemed worthy of serving his Country, he would never be guilty of plundering her. By these Instances we may see in what Light these Kinds of Favors have been always received. What avails it, then, to endeavour to gloss over this Affair, by calling it the spontaneous Mark of his Majesty's Approbation of his Services, which differs not in the least from the meanest Pension? Let us now consider those eminent Services for which his Country is indebted to him, and see what they amount to. And I think, (for I see his Merits as well as his Demerits) that he has none greater to boast of than that

that Spirit which he seems to have infused into the Administration, who before him were as much too pacific as he is too enterprifing. To him also we owe the Reduction of Canada, which, nevertheless, I doubt, has cost us more in Money and Men than the Country itself is worth. But the French Islands, upon which their Fisheries depend, are undoubtedly of the utmost Importance, as the Loss of them tends greatly to weaken the Enemy's Marine, and to strengthen our own. With regard to Senegal and Gorée, if I am rightly informed, Mr. Phad no other Share in the Conquest of them, than in giving his Approbation of the Measure which had been proposed as an Object worthy our Attention. Who first projected the Conquest of Martinico and Guadalupe, I know not; but this one

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may

may venture to fay, that, however valuable they may be in themselves, we are much more indebted to Providence for Guadalupe, than we are to the first Projectors. Success, however, hath crowned this last Action with Glory, and renders those blameless who would otherwise have been liable to Censure, for dissipating the public Money in a Project which, from the Beginning, was soill contrived and provided for, that the Success was almost next to a Miracle. Is it, however, less reasonable to expect, that a Secretary of State, from the Nature of his Office, should have been perfectly acquainted with the Strength and Weakness of the Enemy in all Places within his own Department; and that, whilst he assumed the Minister, no Measure would have been concerted but in consequence of such Knowledge, without

without leaving the Success of our Arms entirely to Chance? Belleisle is a Kind of Make-weight added to the rest: For, notwithstanding such Sums as have been, expended in taking it, I know of no Use which it has been of to us, but to teach our Military Gentlemen Experience. Let us now look on the other Side of the Account, and we shall find, that we are indebted to this Gentleman for engaging us as Principals in a German War, which of late has cost us, besides the Loss of Men, little less than five Millions Sterling per Annum. And, for these two Years past, our Trade has been much exposed to the Enemy's Privateers, whilst many of our Ships have been idly alarming the Coast of France, and others as idly watching the River Vilaine: Whereour Fleet been employed as E 2 it

it ought to have been, we might, with a small additional Expence, have made ourselves Masters of Martinico, and destroyed all the French Settlements on St. Domingo. In short, the Money and Men which this German War has cost us, and the Expence which we have from Time to Time put ourselves to in forming idle Expeditions, amounts even to more than all that this Gentleman himself proposed to retain, when he made his last Cessions \* to Monsseur Busy, is actually worth; which Terms,

<sup>\*</sup>Though the Goodness and Sasety of a future Peace entirely depended on the Retention of the French Sugar-Islands and Fisheries, which alone can prevent the future Increase of the Enemy's Naval Power, yet the Restoration of them was agreed to in settling Preliminaries with this Gentleman.

Terms, however, the Enemy is yet too haughty to accept. What mighty Cause, then, have we to triumph? And, more particularly, if we reflect, and furely we ought to reflect, on the State of our Public Debt, which has been so much inflamed by his Measures, that the Nation already staggers under its immense Load: A Consideration which is the more affecting, as the Consequences will be much more severely felt on the Decline of our Trade; which must necessarily be expected whenever the Sword is sheathed, and a happy Period put to the Rage of War; and more especially as it seems to be a Point given up, (which, for my Country's Sake, I am forry to hear) that the French should be allowed the Fishing-Trade in the Gulf of St. Laurence, and the Banks of \* Newfoundland, almost in as unlimited a Manner as they before enjoyed it.

And now, O ye Mothers! whose Sons have so often enjoyed the Posts of Honour in Germany, I appeal to you, if you have not Reason to extol Mr. P—, though few, very few, perhaps, of your Children, may ever return to tell the Story of all their direful Hardships! And you, Gentlemen, who pay and not receive Taxes, give me Leave to ask you, if you have not found the highest Satisfaction in Mr. P—'s Conduct and Management? But, above all, you Gentlemen of the Alley, and you,

<sup>\*</sup> Whatever is not mentioned in the new Treaty remains good on the Footing of the old.

you, ye Contractors, are you not obliged in Gratitude, more than any body, to offer Incense to the Shrine of this Great Minister? for surely, under his Administration, you have reaped a Golden Harvest: But nevertheless, should any of you prove so unconsciencious as to deny his great Merit, I make no Doubt but that he is unembarassed enough to applaud himself, and to laugh at the Cits.

FINIS.

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#### ERRATUM.

After the Words, meanest Pension, Page 32, add, which nothing but a willing Mind could induce his Acceptance of when a Man's Honor was at stake.